

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claims 1-25 and add new claims 26-36 as follows:

1.- 25. (Cancelled)

26. (New) A method for determining the concentration of an analyte in a sample, said method comprising:

providing a system comprising a reagent test strip having a sample receiving region, and an optical meter for determining analyte concentration in a sample introduced to said sample receiving region;

introducing a sample to said receiving region, wherein said sample is selected from the group consisting of a control fluid and a test fluid, wherein said control fluid comprises a reflectance component comprising a dye having a maximum absorbance of visual light outside that of hemoglobin; determining the concentration of analyte in said sample with said meter; and determining whether said sample is said control fluid or said test fluid.

27. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said reflectance component is selected from the group consisting of copper phthalocyanine-3,4',4'',4''' – tetrasulfonic acid, tetrasodium salt, 3,7-bis(dimethylamino)phenothiazin-5-ium chloride, copper(II) phthalocyanine and 1-(1-naphthylazo)-2-naphthol-3,6-disulfonic acid disodium salt.

28. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said sample is determined to be a control fluid or a test fluid in about 10-20 seconds from the time of sample introduction.

29. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said determination of the type of sample introduced comprises measuring a sample reflectance value of the sample and comparing said sample reflectance value to a reference reflectance value.

30. (New) The method of claim 29, wherein said reference reflectance value comprises a ratio corresponding to the reflectance of light.

31. (New) The method of claim 30, wherein said ratio is the K/S ratio, where K is the light absorption coefficient in solid phase and S is the light scattering coefficient.

32. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising storing said sample reflectance value in a memory element of said meter.

33. (New) The method of claim 29, further comprising excluding said sample reflectance value from a memory element of said meter.

34. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said analyte is glucose.

35. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said test sample is whole blood.

36. (New) The method of claim 26, wherein said meter measures a signal produced by said sample wherein said measured signal produced by said control fluid is less than said measured signal produced by said test fluid.